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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/596,634

06/19/2006

Norbert Cottone

72274

8594

23872 7590 04/16/2009  
MCGLEW & TUTTLE, PC  
P.O. BOX 9227  
SCARBOROUGH STATION  
SCARBOROUGH, NY 10510-9227

EXAMINER

PARADISO, JOHN ROGER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3721

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

04/16/2009

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/596,634	<b>Applicant(s)</b> COTTONE, NORBERT	
	<b>Examiner</b> John Paradiso	<b>Art Unit</b> 3721	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 March 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5,7,8,11,12,15,16,19,21-23,25-42,44-46,48,50,53-55,59 and 60 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5,7,8,11,12,15,16,19,21-23,25-42,44-46,48,50,53-55,59 and 60 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Request for Continued Examination***

1. The request filed on 3/30/2009 for a Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114 based on parent Application No. 10/596,634 is acceptable and a CPA has been established. An action on the CPA is attached.

### ***Claim Rejections***

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 1, 5, 7-8, 11-12, 15-16, 19, 21-23, 25-42, 44-46, 48, 50, 53-55, and 59-60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over FADAIE (US 5328319), as set forth in paragraph 3 of the previous Office Action and reprinted below for convenience:

FADAIE discloses a method and apparatus for handling objects (32) in which at least part of a load is gripped (see Fig. 3A and 4A), moved, and loaded. The objects gripped are being read as the claimed "modified arrangement".

FADAIE does not specifically disclose the objects as being rod-shaped.

Art Unit: 3721

However, the objects disclosed in FADAIE are cylindrical, and further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the method and apparatus of FADAIE to handle any shape of object to provide a wider choice of articles for the end-user.

Regarding claims 2 and 23, the gripper (50) can be clearly shown changing its geometry during use (see Fig. 5A and 5B).

Regarding claim 5, the gripper (50) can be clearly shown changing its spacing as it moves during use (see Fig. 5A and 5B).

Regarding claim 8, the final density shown in FADAIE is being read on the claimed "sought packing density".

Regarding claim 11, Fig. 4B clearly shows the objects being picked and loaded as a block.

Regarding claim 15, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to remove the items row-wise or in any other manner that makes it easy and efficient for the operator.

Regarding claims 16, 42, and 46, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a second gripping device for further moving of the objects, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art.

Art Unit: 3721

Regarding claim claims 21-22, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to position the loading aid at any angle that is most efficacious for loading, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art.

Regarding claim 60, FADAIE discloses a robot (10) handling arm.

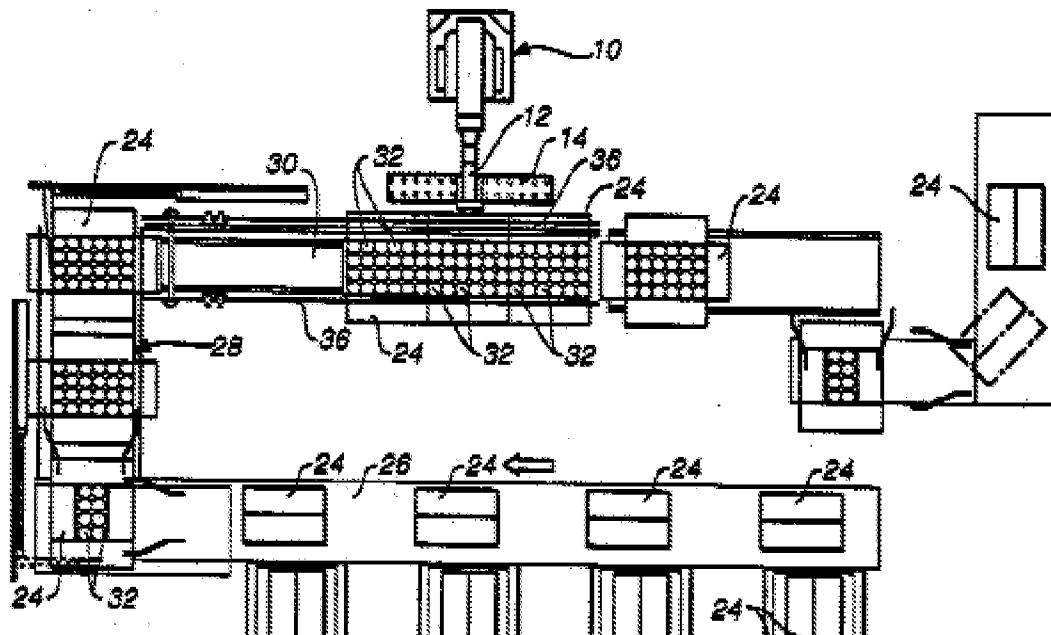
#### ***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments filed 3/30/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

5. Applicant states on page 15 of his Response that "Fadaie fails to teach and fails to suggest the combination of gripping objects in a first geometrical arrangement with one or more gripping elements and moving the objects after the objects have been gripped in the first geometrical with a moving means such that one or more gripping elements are moved to form a modified geometrical arrangement of the objects that has a modified packaging density."

However, Fig. 1 of FADAIE (shown in part on the following page) shows the stacks being changed in length by means of a gripper, moved closer together, and rotated, interchanging their length and width, which is being read as modifying the geometric arrangement.

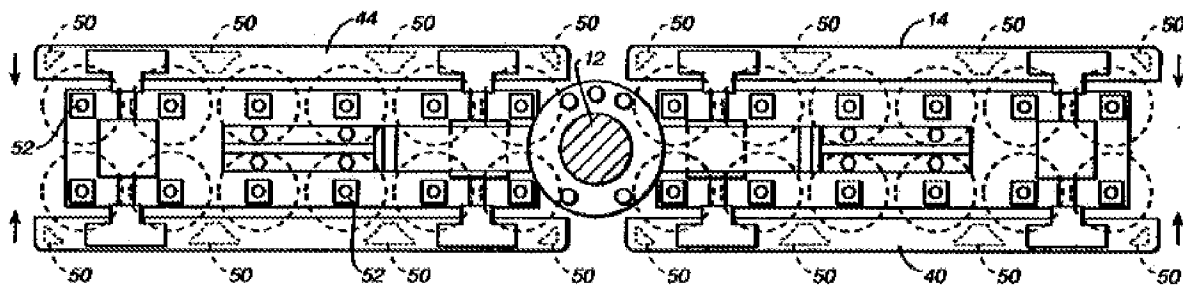
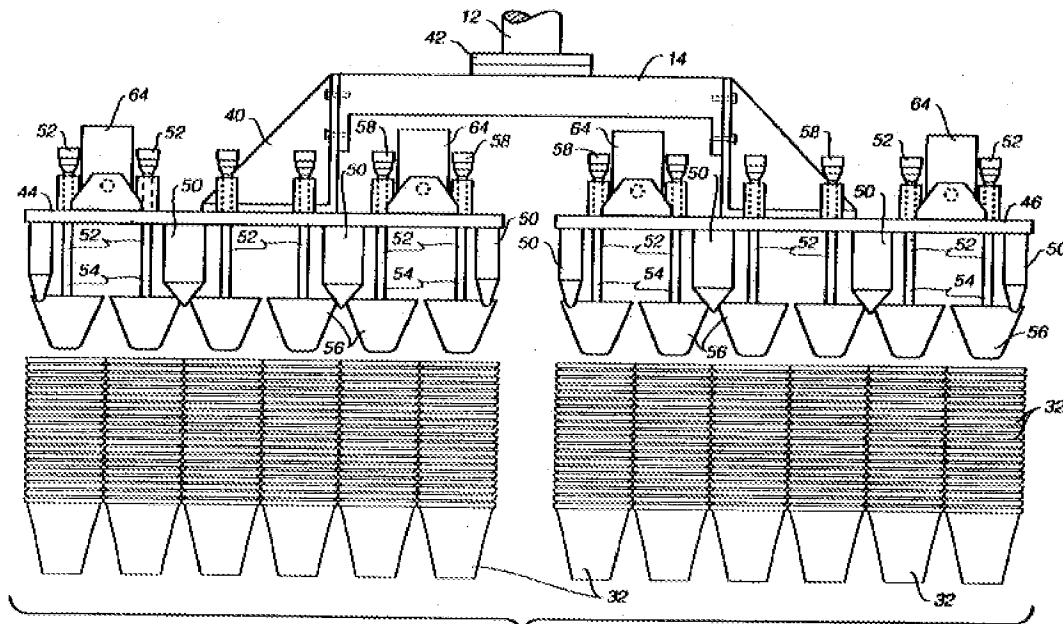
Art Unit: 3721



Art Unit: 3721

6. Applicant states on page 16 of his Response that "However, the article engaging means 14 of Fadaie does not have movable gripping elements that are moved to modify the packaging density of the cups after the article engaging means 14 grips the cups."

However, as explained above, FADAIE discloses a method and apparatus for handling objects (32) in which at least part of a load is gripped (see Fig. 3A and 4A) (shown below), moved, and loaded.

**FIG. 3A****FIG. 4A**

7. Applicant states on page 16 of his Response that “However, the follower elements 52 of the article engaging means 14 of Fadaie are not moved to change the spacing between the cups such that the packaging density of the cups is modified.”

However, as explained above, Fig. 1 of FADAIE shows the stacks being changed in length, moved closer together, and rotated, interchanging their length and width, which is being read as modifying the geometric arrangement.

### ***Conclusion***

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Paradiso. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday, 9:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (ET).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Rinaldi Rada, can be reached at the number listed below.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the 3700 Technology Center Receptionist.

/John R Paradiso/

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Examiner John Paradiso: (571) 272-4466

April 13, 2009

Additional Phone Numbers:

Supervisor Rinaldi Rada: (571) 272-4467

Fax (Official): (571) 273-8300

Fax (Direct to Examiner) (571) 273-4466 (Drafts only)